

REMARKS

The Examiner's action dated March 6, 2003 has been received, and it's contents carefully noted.

Claims 18-26 have been canceled. Claims 27 and 28 have been placed in independent form by incorporation therein of all of the subject matter of the claims from which they previously depended. Claims 29-46 have been added. Thus, claims 27-46 are pending.

Claim 18 has been replaced with new claim 29, which now defines a plastic material section according to the invention in structural terms, specifying that the section has a longitudinal succession of hole precursors. "Hole precursors" are defined in the present specification at page 1, line 21 to page 2, line 4 and at page 5, lines 12-24. These definitions are to be used in interpreting the application claims.

Claim 21 has been replaced with new claim 36, which recites that the holes of the contour are blind (specification, page 7, lines 28-31).

Claim 24 has been replaced by new claim 43, drafted to better define the invention.

Appln. No. 09/960,647
Amd. dated September 24, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 6, 2003

New claim 44 defines an embodiment in which each hole precursor is an area delimited by a closed contour formed by a groove. This is supported by the disclosure at page 5, lines 22-24.

New claims 32, 35, 38 and 41 are identical to claim 43, except that they have different claim dependencies.

New claim 45 contains the features of claim 43 and further specifies that the hole precursors are adapted to receive fixation screws.

New claim 46 is similar to claim 45, but specifies that the hole precursors constitute means for receiving fixation screws.

The prior art rejections are all traversed on the ground that the pending claims, and particularly new parent claim 29, define structure that is not disclosed in or suggested by the applied references.

The manner in which the claims distinguish over each of the applied references will be discussed in detail below.

U.S. Patent No. 4,391,426 (Gothberg) discloses a support strip of plastic material with U-shaped cross-section for supporting

Appln. No. 09/960,647
Amd. dated September 24, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 6, 2003

cables and the like. This strip extends in a longitudinal direction and has a longitudinal succession of holes 13 for screws, which holes may be oblong

However, this reference fails to teach or suggest providing the strip with hole precursors, as that term is defined in the present specification. For this reason alone, this reference fails to teach or suggest the structure of claim 29 and all of the claims dependent therefrom.

It is therefore submitted that when the present claims are properly interpreted, they should be found to be patentable over Gothberg.

U.S. Patent No. 5,914,665 (Thorp et al) discloses, as acknowledged by the Examiner, a cover that is preferably of molded plastic. This cover has a front wall, a top wall, a bottom wall and two sidewalls. Sidewalls 58, 60 of the cover each include a plurality of dedicated break away areas for slots to accommodate conduits connected to a junction box 12. Such areas are removable panels 131, 134, 136 adapted to free slots, and are aligned with punch out panels at the junction box 12.

It must be noted that this reference does not disclose sections, which are the structural elements defined in the

claims of the present application. In this connection, it must be taken into account that, as explained in the present specification, a section is what can be obtained by extrusion, what means that it is not a box, or a box cover.

Further, the cover of this prior art reference does not include hole precursors, since it mentions a small number of slot-making break away areas.

Thus this reference fails to disclose or suggest the article defined in claim 29, and thus also in the dependent claims. Furthermore, Thorp clearly does not disclose the structural features defined in claim 30, which replaces claim 19. Taking into account the definition of a blind hole whose bottom is constituted by a continuous web, appearing in the present specification, it is clear that no such structure is disclosed by Thorp.

U.S. Patent No. 6,089,723 (Ogasawara et al) discloses a structure for mounting a base and a base cover for an automobile door mirror. The base cover is of a complex shape (see figure 2) and has holes able to receive screws. There is no disclosure in this reference of a section, within the sense of the present invention, and no longitudinal plurality of

hole **precursors**. Whatever holes are needed are, apparently, fully formed when the parts are manufactured.

For reasons similar to those presented with regard to Thorp, this reference fails to teach or suggest the substance of claim 29 and of the specific geometry defined in claim 33, which replaces claim 20.

U.S. Patent No.4,457,964 (Kaminstein) discloses place mats obtained from a web having, at the lines of attachment between mats, weakened zones, perforations, or recesses for the sole purpose of facilitating separation of the web into individual mats. These features can not properly be considered to constitute hole precursors because they do not have the form of hole precursors as defined in the present application and can not serve as starting points for forming holes.

Also this reference clearly does not disclose the structural features defined in claims 36 and 39, which replace claims 21 and 22. Each of claims 36 and 39 recites that "each hole precursor is an area delimited by a closed contour", while the structures disclosed by Kaminstein can not be considered to provide a closed contour because it discloses structures along some areas of its periphery, indents or recesses 30 or 32 which correspond to perforations 24 or 26

Appln. No. 09/960,647
Amd. dated September 24, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 6, 2003

provided transversely, at some locations within the web for facilitating separation of the mats.

Furthermore, the technical field of this reference is far removed from the present invention.

In summary, Kaminstein fails to teach or suggest a section comprising a longitudinal plurality of hole precursors, since it only provides a web with small transverse series of little perforations which do not, and cannot, have the function of hole precursors.

Claims 27 and 28 have been placed in independent form. Since these claims have not been rejected, it is understood that they are now allowable.

Accordingly, it is submitted that all of the pending claims distinguish patentably over the applied reference and it is therefore requested that the rejections of record be reconsidered and withdrawn, that claims 27-46 be allowed, and that the application be found in allowable condition.

If the above amendment should not now place the

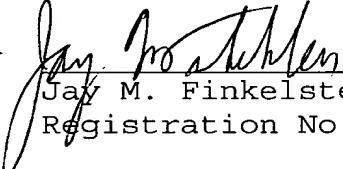
Appln. No. 09/960,647
Amd. dated September 24, 2003
Reply to Office Action of March 6, 2003

application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to call undersigned counsel to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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